North Dakota Joint Information Center
News Release

For Immediate Release
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Highway 1806 south of Mandan to open with pilot cars noon Friday

Mandan, N.D. — The Morton County Sheriff's Department and the North Dakota Highway Patrol will continue their phased reopening of State Highway 1806, by allowing two-way traffic via pilot cars beginning noon on Friday, March 17. The pilot cars will escort vehicles approximately nine miles between Fort Rice and a point south of the Cannonball Bridge. This process will continue until state and county officials determine it is safe to resume normal traffic flow.

"The conditions were met to continue our phased approach to reopening Highway 1806," said Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier. "We understand that opening this road is important to facilitate the routine business and commutes that take place along the 1806 corridor. We ask motorists to be patient as we continue this phased approach to fully reopening Highway 1806."

Contractors have removed 21,480,000 pounds of trash and debris from the three areas of land managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Contractors and the North Dakota Department of Transportation are working this week to clear additional debris from ditches and mud from the roadway south of Backwater Bridge.

"From the outset, our priorities were public safety, protecting the environment and bringing this situation to a peaceful resolution," said Gov. Doug Burgum. "With the camps and roadway cleared, we can now move toward re-establishing traffic on Highway 1806 and restoring normalcy for the residents of Morton and Sioux counties and all of North Dakota. We ask for the cooperation of all parties to ensure a smooth transition."

Motorists should expect delays of up to 30 minutes and to plan their travel accordingly. Anyone hindering the pilot car process or parking along the highway will be subject to arrest.

Law enforcement will continue to patrol the area. Roads may become slippery due to mud and other debris from trucks entering and exiting the roadway. For road condition and load restriction information on state highways go to dot.nd.gov.

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Find this release and additional information related to the protest response at
http://ndresponse.gov/